

FIELD DAY AT THE FARM HÅNSTA ÖSTERGÄRDE

The second field day of the SOLMACC project at the farm Hånsta Östergärde was realized on Tuesday the 21 of August. At 12 am about 30 participants gathered on the farmyard and were welcomed by farmers Kjell and Ylva Sjelin. A lunch prepared by the hosts was served as the participants were getting to know each other. The group was a mix of farmers from the area (within about 100 km), civil servants from the municipality and county administrative board as well as researchers and other interested actors.

After lunch and coffee Kjell Sjelin held a presentation inside his workshop, talking about the farm and their ideas concerning sustainability through the entire food chain. He showed many pictures and presented which parts of the farm system that had changed as a result of the SOLMACC-project.



Photo credits: Felix Johansson

Following the presentation, the group walked out to look at the mobile shelters that the farmers use in order to keep the animals out on the field during the whole year. Kjell explained how they move the shelters with a tractor when the straw bed is deep enough and how they in the spring, before preparing for the sowing, the straw containing a lot of manure and nutrients is spread directly on the fields.

The group moved on to the alley cropping system, which many had been looking forward to see. The farmers grow a for Sweden normal organic crop rotation between the rows of trees and bushes. This year the farmers have cultivated ley between the rows. The drought has been severe in basically all parts of Sweden this year and the ley harvest has been extraordinary low. However, as was shown on this farm, lucern has had a better growth than many other crops and will, together with the rain that has fallen during the last couple of weeks, contribute to a better third harvest than previously expected.

The group was impressed with the good growth and potential harvest of the sea buckthorn-row and there were discussions on how the berries best could be harvested, marketed and sold. At the moment, the farmers use the berries for their own needs and also have a self-pick service.

Next, the group investigated the system of reduced tillage where spring and winter cereals are planted at the same time in spring, reducing the need for preparing the soil. The farmer explained how this systems works really well sometimes but about one year out of four the harvest of the winter cereal is failing. Also a new crop, winter pea, has been introduced on this farm. However due to the drought, this crop has failed this year.





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Also, other trials that are being performed at the farm were shown to the group. This included a small forest garden, a row with about 150 different perennials and also a small site where a group from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences is doing research on perennial grains.

In the afternoon, coffee and snacks were served as Oscar Franzén from Ekologiska Lantbrukarna gave a presentation about the SOLMACC project. There were also discussions about the different methods and strategies and about how climate work on farms can be scaled up.



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In the evening, at 17.30 pm, a new group of about 13 people arrived and the same procedure was repeated, starting with coffee, presentation, field walk, discussions and coffee again. The day was finished at 21 pm and the participants expressed that it had been a good day with many interesting insights and discussions.

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